



# BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

*Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam*

*A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhagavatam*

Dedicated to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda,  
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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# A Humble Apology!





# A HUMBLE APOLOGY!

please forgive me

*Mistakes are common! What matters more than a formal apology is an honest repentance and an attempt to avoid repetition.*

## To Err Is Human

Everyone is prone to make mistakes. While some people commit small mistakes, some do big blunders, and some do rarely while some do often; after all, no mortal being is perfect. The scriptures say that in this world, a human being is subject to four kinds of defects namely:

(i) imperfect senses, (ii) committing mistakes, (iii) getting illusioned, and (iv) cheating propensity. Thus even very intelligent and advanced personalities commit mistakes at times.

King Parīkṣit was the glorious descendant of the Pāṇḍavas. He was a noble king who was protected by Lord Kṛṣṇa even within the womb of his mother. He also chastised the personality of Kali and counteracted his influences. Once, he went to the forest for hunting. Afflicted by thirst, he approached the hermitage of a sage called Śamika and requested for some water. The sage was absorbed in deep meditation and couldn't respond to the request of Parīkṣit Mahārāja. Offended by the sage's neglect, Parīkṣit took a dead snake and placed it around the neck of Śamika Ṛṣi, who was still in trance. He then left the place and went to his palace.

King Citraketu was a great devotee of Lord Sankarṣaṇa. He attained the *darśana* of the Lord in seven days, by chanting a mantra given to him by Nārada Muni. Once, he was travelling in his airplane given by Lord Viṣṇu. He arrived at a place where Lord Śiva was sitting, embracing Pārvatī on his lap, in an assembly of great sages and other exalted persons. Seeing this, Citraketu laughed and said that ordinary men embrace their wives in private, but how could Lord Śiva do that in public in front of the sages.

## Intentional Vs. Accidental Mistakes

Although committing mistakes is common for a human, one should at least make sure that one doesn't do them purposefully. Incidentally or accidentally one may err sometimes, but premeditated mistakes done deliberately will have more serious repercussions. Honest people do mistakes accidentally and do not justify them, but sincerely apologize for them. Dishonest people do wrong things knowingly, yet instead of admitting them they try to cover them up or justify them.





Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “The Lord is always prepared to excuse His devotee, but if a devotee takes advantage of the Lord's leniency and purposefully commits mistakes again and again, the Lord will certainly punish him by letting him fall down into the clutches of the illusory energy. One must strongly adhere to the lotus feet of the Lord in devotional service. Then one's position is secure.” (SB 5.18.4 P)

What Parīkṣit Mahārāja did was certainly a mistake, however, it was due to his fatigue, thirst and hunger. Thus it was totally circumstantial. One proof was that he never insulted any sages or *brāhmaṇas* before or after this incident. Another proof was his honest repentance for what he did.

Citraketu's criticizing of Lord Śiva was also a mistake, but he did it with a good intent. He knew that exalted Śiva would not be affected by such uncommon behavior. However, Citraketu was concerned that a common man might misunderstand and criticize or disrespect Śiva, and thus become a victim of offending the great demigod. Citraketu wanted to protect the honor of Lord Śiva and protect common people from offending Śiva.

## Regret, But Don't Forget

Mistake is a mistake if one fails to learn a lesson from it. A sane person is not one who never commits mistakes. When a sane person does a mistake, he sincerely regrets for it, honestly apologizes for it, genuinely attempts to rectify it or atone for it and truly endeavors not to repeat it. He also takes responsibility for the consequences without shifting blame.

Parīkṣit Mahārāja, after returning to his palace, reflected on his act of garlanding Śamika Ṛṣi with a dead snake. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “The pious King [Parīkṣit] regretted his accidental improper treatment of the powerful *brāhmaṇa*, who was faultless. Such repentance is natural for a good man like the King, and such repentance delivers a devotee from all kinds of sins accidentally committed. The devotees are naturally faultless. Accidental sins committed by a devotee are sincerely regretted, and by the grace of the Lord all sins unwillingly committed by a devotee are burnt in the fire of repentance.” (SB 1.19.1 P)

Genuine regret or remorse, when done in a positive spirit brings out auspiciousness, just as Parīkṣit's regret made him turn towards God and God's representatives with humility. But unjust and egoistic regret could lead to depression or destructive tendencies.

**When a sane person does a mistake, he sincerely regrets for it, honestly apologizes for it, genuinely attempts to rectify it or atone for it and truly endeavors not to repeat it.**

Remembering one's mistakes is beneficial in one sense. Because, when one does good work, there is a possibility of becoming proud of one's accomplishments and think high of oneself. But if one is aware that he also has some shortcomings and honestly remembers one's earlier mistakes, one really can't be proud. This helps keeping one's feet on the ground. This is in no way to discourage rejoicing one's success, but it helps to keep one's feet on the ground by not becoming unnecessarily puffed up and look down upon others. Committing mistakes *makes* one humble and remembering them makes one *remain* humble.





## Expecting and Accepting the Reaction

An honest person is prepared to suffer the consequences of one's misdeeds without trying to escape. It's natural to expect a punishment for one's mistake, but Parikṣit not only expected a punishment, but being such a man of integrity, he desired a punishment. He considered that if he were not punished, he would be encouraged to do such mistakes again, or his family members might be punished for his wrong deed. A devotee doesn't want others to suffer for his mistakes.

A student of Śamīka Ṛṣi named Gauramukha came and informed Parikṣit that he has been cursed to die in seven days by Śṛṅgī, the son of Śamīka Ṛṣi. Parikṣit happily received the curse seeing it as the arrangement of the Supreme Lord and retired from his role as an emperor and heard *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

When King Citraketu criticized Lord Śiva, Pārvatī became upset with his arrogant behavior, and chastised him just as a mother chastises a mischievous son. Citraketu should have noticed the elevated position of Lord Śiva and restrained himself from criticizing him in public. So, Pārvatī became angry and cursed him to become a demon. Citraketu didn't protest but accepted the curse gracefully and left. He became the great Vṛtrāsura in his next life.

**By committing mistakes one becomes humble and by remembering them one remains humble.**

### Why and Why Not Apologize?

Apologizing and begging forgiveness are natural responses of a sane person, who realizes that he has done a mistake. That apology is not a formality, but is born out of a sincere regret for one's own misdeed and empathy towards others' feelings.

Parikṣit regretted for his mistake, but didn't go to Śamīka Ṛṣi and apologize. Because Śamīka Ṛṣi himself was so remorseful that a great monarch and devotee like Parikṣit has been cursed by his son unnecessarily. Parikṣit's mistake was minor but Śṛṅgī's punishment was severe, highly disproportionate to the offense. Śamīka Ṛṣi's embarrassment was clear to Parikṣit when the news of the curse was communicated to him. Therefore, Parikṣit didn't apologize to not further increase the embarrassment of the sage.



King Citraketu, when cursed by Pārvatī, immediately got down from his airplane, offered obeisances to Pārvatī and apologized, addressing her as mother. A chaste wife becomes angry and upset when her husband is disrespected. Thus Pārvatī felt offended to the criticism of Śiva by Citraketu. And acknowledging her feelings, Citraketu told her that he didn't mean to disrespect Śiva, but because she was distressed by his behavior, he begged forgiveness from her.

In the case of Parikṣit Mahārāja, Śamīka Ṛṣi was not offended, but embarrassed. In the case of Citraketu Mahārāja, Pārvatī was offended and angry. So, in not apologizing and apologizing, Parikṣit and Citraketu, only cared for the feelings of Śamīka and Pārvatī respectively. Being exalted devotees, they didn't consider how they were cursed so severely for their small mistakes. This showed their detachment, maturity and dependence on the Supreme Lord.

**Mistakes of great devotees:** In fact, this unprecedented behavior of the virtuous Parikṣit and devoted Citraketu were a part of the divine plan of the Supreme Lord. By the Lord's will, Parikṣit was put in an awkward situation, so that the Holy Scripture *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* could make its appearance. To purify a slight tinge of pride in King Citraketu and quickly bring him to the spiritual world within one short lifetime, the Lord inspired Pārvatī to curse him. By these arrangements in the lives of His pure devotees, the Lord also taught us beautiful life lessons.

### The Attitude Behind Apology

Expression is important, but the emotion behind that expression is more important. The internal attitude behind one's external apology shows how sincere is that apology. Apology isn't a ritual, but it's a heartfelt expression of one's honest emotion.



**Confession as a profession:** Some admit their mistakes and apologize for them, but later repeat the same mistakes. Of course, no one can become perfect overnight. It takes some time to come out of a bad habit and thus one may repeatedly commit mistakes, but a sincere intent to overcome them will eventually bring them the right consciousness and behavior. But if one has no intention to rectify one's mistakes, but just formally or ritualistically says 'sorry' and continues them, he is considered a professional sinner. This is compared to the bath of an elephant who puts dirt on his body after having taken a nice bath in the river.

**Clarification Vs. justification:** One may clarify the circumstances under which one happened to commit an accidental mistake. One may clarify one's intentions behind one's apparent unpleasant deed. But denying one's faults and justifying one's misdeeds by philosophizing is not the nature of a sober person. Citraketu clarified his intentions to Mother Pārvatī, but didn't justify his actions; he readily accepted her curse as his destiny and respectfully departed.

**Offense after apology:** Sometimes, mistakes or offenses are not innocent and circumstantial, but are out of one's prolonged and deep rooted envy and anger towards others. One such example is Prajāpati Dakṣa who envied Lord Śiva, who was more exalted than him. Once he publicly criticized Śiva and cursed him. His offensive mentality later made him even neglect and disrespect his own daughter Satī, the wife of Śiva, who then gave up

Her life. Angry Śiva sent Virabhadra, who beheaded Dakṣa. Thereafter, upon Lord Brahmā's request, Lord Śiva kindly revived the life of Dakṣa. Dakṣa repented for his offense and begged forgiveness from Lord Śiva. Yet, due to the traces of his offensive attitude and behavior towards Śiva, in his next life he again committed a similar offense towards the great sage Nārada Muni by criticizing and cursing him.

**Sincerity in apology:** If one's apology isn't sincere, one may commit similar mistakes again. Once Indra, the King of the heaven, became so puffed up of his position. To humble him, Lord Kṛṣṇa stopped his worship and encouraged the residents of Vṛndāvana to worship the Gvardhana Hill. Indra became angry and caused devastating rains to destroy Vṛndāvana. But Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana and saved His people. Indra realized his mistake towards the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa and apologized him. Kṛṣṇa gave him a caution and forgave him. However, Indra's apology wasn't sincere as he committed a similar mistake again later. Once, Kṛṣṇa went to the heaven and wanted to take a special tree called Pārijāta to satisfy His beloved queen Satyabhāmā. At that time, Indra protested and got into a fight with Kṛṣṇa.

Making mistakes is common. But an honest person realizes them, regrets for them, rectifies them, remembers them and doesn't repeat them. He honestly apologizes for his mistakes, not a ritual but as a heartfelt gesture towards the effected party. ☀

## BALARĀMA

The Protector of the Devotees

garbha-saṅkarṣaṇāt taṁ vai  
prāhuḥ saṅkarṣaṇaṁ bhuvi  
rāmeti loka-ramaṇād  
balabhadraṁ balocchrayāt  
(SB 10.2.13)

The son of Rohiṇī will also be celebrated as Saṅkarṣaṇa because of being sent from the womb of Devakī to the womb of Rohiṇī. He will be called Rāma because of His ability to please all the inhabitants of Gokula, and He will be known as Balabhadra because of His extensive physical strength.

## VERSE OF THE MONTH



Because He is as powerful as Lord Kṛṣṇa and can bestow spiritual power to the devotees, He is therefore known as Baladeva. (SB 1.11.16 P)



**BHĀGAVATA  
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam





**Question: What are the different kinds of pralaya?**

**Answer:** (SB 12.4.34)

*nityo naimittikaś caiva tathā prākṛtiko layaḥ  
ātyantikaś ca kathitaḥ kālasya gatiḥ īdṛśī*

The progress of time is described in terms of the four kinds of annihilation (*pralaya*)—continuous, occasional, elemental and final.

1. One thousand cycles of four ages constitute one day of Brahmā, and each day of Brahmā, called a *kalpa*, contains within it the lifetimes of fourteen Manus. The duration of Brahmā's night is the same as that of his day. During his night Brahmā sleeps, and the three planetary systems meet destruction; this is the *naimittika*, or occasional, annihilation.
2. When Brahmā's life span of one hundred years is finished, there occurs the *prākṛtika*, or total material or elemental, annihilation. At that time the seven elements of material nature, beginning with the *mahat*, and the entire universal egg composed of them are destroyed.
3. At every moment time invisibly transforms the bodies of all created beings and all other manifestations of matter. This process of transformation causes the living entity to undergo the constant annihilation of birth and death. This is called *nitya* or continuous annihilation.
4. When a person achieves knowledge of the Absolute, he understands factual reality. He perceives the entire created universe as separate from the Absolute and therefore unreal. That is called the *ātyantika*, or final, annihilation (liberation).

# PARI PRAŚNA

**Question: What is yukta-vairagya?**

**Answer:** There are two types of bees: bumblebees, who collect nectar from flowers but do not make honey, and honeybees, who manufacture honey in the beehive. The greedy honeybee eventually collects so much honey that it is trapped in its hive. Similarly, a materialistic person becomes trapped under the burden of unnecessary material accumulation.

However, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura points out that for the purpose of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness one may accumulate an unlimited amount of material opulence. This is called *yukta-vairāgya*, or using everything in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

One who has given his life to Kṛṣṇa may collect unlimitedly on Lord Kṛṣṇa's behalf. In fact, without acquiring material opulence, how is it possible to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world? But if one tries to personally enjoy the funds or facilities acquired for the missionary activities of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, he commits the greatest offense. Therefore, even in the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one should collect only what he can immediately engage in practical devotional service; otherwise one will fall down to the platform of ordinary greediness. (SB 11.8.12 P)

Mail us at [pradipika@vidyapitha.in](mailto:pradipika@vidyapitha.in) your questions on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Answers to shortlisted questions shall be published in the next issue of Bhāgavata Pradīpikā.

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Mail your caption to [pradipika@vidyapitha.in](mailto:pradipika@vidyapitha.in) with "August Quiz Corner" in the subject. The best caption(s) along with the your name will be published in the next issue.



Best captions for the last month's image:

**Visual Ecstasy**  
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**The great souls are under the protection of the divine nature** (By Ganesh Divakar)



**BHĀGAVATA  
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Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

Śrī Rāma, or Balarāma, is the protector of the devotees of the Lord. Baladeva acts as the spiritual master of all devotees, and only by His causeless mercy are the fallen souls delivered. (SB 1.14.29 P)





Just as an ordinary man is overjoyed to discover an unexpected treasure, one who is actually intelligent is overjoyed to gain the association of a pure devotee of the Lord, by which one's life can easily be perfected. (SB 11.2.30 P)



When one is very eager for more and more money, he is not satisfied even when he is a millionaire or a multimillionaire, but wants to earn more and more money by any means. The same mentality is present in a devotee. The devotee is never satisfied, thinking, "This is the limit of my devotional service." The more he engages in the service of the Lord, the more service he wants to give. (SB 9.5.27 P)



If one chants the holy name of the Lord, even in a helpless condition or without desiring to do so, all the reactions of his sinful life depart, just as when a lion roars, all the small animals flee in fear. (SB 6.2.7 P)

## ANALOGY ARENA

As fire, although situated in wood, is perceived to be different from the wood, as air, although situated within the mouth and nostrils, is perceived to be separate, and as the sky, although all-pervading, never mixes with anything, so the living entity, although now encaged within the material body, of which it is the source, is separate from it. (SB 7.2.43 P)



Just as the fruits and flowers of a tree in due course of time undergo six changes—birth, existence, growth, transformation, dwindling and then death—the material body, which is obtained by the spirit soul under different circumstances, undergoes similar changes. (SB 7.7.18 P)



When iron is put into a fire it becomes red-hot and is no longer iron but fire. Similarly, the so-called material bodies of devotees who fully engage in the devotional service of the Lord, being constantly in the fire of spiritual life, have nothing to do with matter, but are spiritualized. (SB 7.9.26 P)







# BHĀGAVATA PRAVĀHA

*The Flow of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

## THE CALCULATION OF TIME

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Canto 3 Chapters 10-11]

*Maitreya describes the ten types of creation (3.10). He describes the characteristics time in general (3.10), and then elaborates on it in detail (3.11). He further describes about the calculation of time from the smallest particle of matter, the duration of yugas, the duration of Manus, the lifespan of Brahmā and so forth (3.11).*

### Brahmā creates the fourteen Worlds

Vidura inquired, “How did Brahma create the bodies of living entities from his own body and mind?”. Being enlivened Maitreya begins to reply, “As advised by the Lord, Brahmā meditated for hundred celestial years. He saw both the lotus and water trembling due to strong wind. Due to his penance and transcendental knowledge, Brahmā acquired practical knowledge. He drank the wind and water completely. Brahmā contemplated, “From this lotus, I will create all the planets as they were before the destruction.” He entered into the whorl of the lotus and first divided it into three divisions and later into fourteen divisions. He could create the fourteen worlds suitable for different types of *jīvas* because of his causeless devotional service in mature transcendental knowledge.

### Characteristics of Time

Maitreya had spoken about ‘time’ several times previously (in 3.8.12, 3.8.13, 3.8.22 and 3.10.5). Therefore Vidura now asks about ‘time.’ Maitreya describes about the characteristics of time in a nutshell and then expands on it later. He says that the time is the source of interaction of the material modes. It lacks attributes and hence it is imperceptible, just like the wind which causes about the movement of clouds is imperceptible.

Time is limitless – without beginning or end. It is the instrumental cause of creation which separates the material energy from the Lord. It is time which divides the universe into various planetary systems. It is the unmanifest, impersonal feature of the Lord and also the representative of Lord.

### Ten Types of Creation

Before describing about time in detail, Maitreya discusses about the process of creation in summary which is as follows - There are six types of primary creation (*prākṛta sarga*) which is done by the Lord and four types of secondary creation (*visarga* or *vaikṛta*) which is done by Brahmā. The six types of primary creation are - the sum total of material ingredients (*mahat-tattva*), false ego (*ahaṅkāra*), sense objects (*tanmātrā*), senses (*indriya*), *vaikārika* demigods (*deva*) and ignorance (*tamas*). The four types of secondary creation are the immovable *jīvas* (plants), the lower species (animals), human beings and demigods. The four Kumāras were created by Brahmā’s meditation on the Lord i.e. both Brahmā and Lord are the cause. So they are the mixed creation (both *prākṛta* and *vaikṛta*). Thus Brahmā creates the universal affairs with unfailing desires by the force of the Lord’s energy.







## Divisions of Time

Maitreya Rṣi now begins to describe the details of time. He gives the measurement of time in terms of its covering a certain space of atoms by the movement of the sun. Just as matter has small and big divisions, time also has similar divisions. Time covered by the sun in passing over the smallest, indivisible and invisible particle of matter (*paramāṇu*) is called *paramāṇutām* (8/2,43,000 second approximately) and the time expended from the beginning of creation till the dissolution of the universes is called *parama-mahān* (311 trillion, 40 billion earth years which is the lifetime of Brahmā). In between these two, there are various divisions of time described in the pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Vidura further enquires from Maitreya Rṣi the life span of those who live beyond the *kalpa* of Brahmā. One *kalpa* is one day of Brahmā which constitutes to 4.32 billion earth years. In order to explain this, Maitreya first explains the calculation of the four *yugas*.

## Duration of Yugas

One *catur-yuga* (Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali) equals 12,000 years of the demigods or 4,320,000 human years. Kaliyuga is 432,000 human years and 1200 demigod years. Dvāpara, Tretā and Satya are twice, thrice and four times of Kali respectively. There is a time duration overlapping two *yugas* known as *yuga-sandhyās* during which the particular *yuga-dharmas* are practised. Currently, the *yuga-sandhya* between *dvāpara* and Kali is going on which includes the first 36,000 years of Kali. Above Svargaloka (Maharloka and Brahmaloka), the

duration of one day is equal to 1000 *catur-yugas*. The night during which Brahmā sleeps is also of the same duration.

## Duration of Manus

At the end of Brahmā's night, the creation of the planets (from Svargaloka to Patalaloka) takes place and stays through the lifespans of fourteen Manus. One Manu rules for 71 *catur-yugas*. In a *manvantara*, which is the period of one Manu, the seven sages, the demigods, Indra and Manu appear simultaneously, but Manu's descendants appear gradually. During the *manvantara*, the Supreme Lord appears in different incarnations, as Manu and others and maintains the universe. At the end of Brahmā's day, all the oceans swell and cover the three world. Kālāgni-rudrā destroys the three worlds. Sankarṣaṇa emanates fire from His mouth. At this time, the residents of Maharloka, distressed by the fire, move to Janaloka which is stationed just above Maharloka. This destruction affects planetary systems upto Maharloka. Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu remains in the water lying on Ananta, while being glorified by the residents of Janaloka. This dissolution is a partial dissolution which happens at the end of Brahmā's day, so it do not affect all the planetary systems.

## Lifespan of Brahmā

Thus, days and nights pass even for Brahmā and his life also comes to an end. One's life endures for only 100 years, in terms of time in different planets. The half of Brahmā's life is called *parārdha* and is already over and the second *parārdha* has begun currently. The first day in the first *parārdha* of Brahmā's life is called *Śveta-varāha-kalpa*, during which Brahmā is born along with four Vedas. The next *kalpa* is called Padma-kalpa during which the universal lotus comes from the navel of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. The first day of the second *parārdha* of his life is called *Varāha-kalpa*, during which Lord Hari appeared as Boar. This *dvi-parārdha* (entire life of Brahmā) is only a *nimesa* (less than a second) for the Lord, who is unchanging, unlimited, beginningless and the soul of the universe. Time is the controller of anyone who is bodily conscious with life spans between *paramāṇu* and *dvi-parārdha*. But, time cannot control the Supreme Lord. The universes with 500 million *yojanas* (4 billion miles) diameter and the layers of elements covering the universes each ten times thicker than the ones before, looks as a *paramāṇu* when they come out of the bodily pores of Maha-visnu.

To be Continued...







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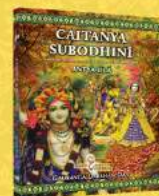
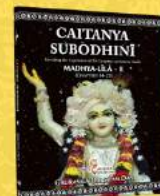
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### NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

BG: Bhagavad-gītā

BS: Brahma-saṁhitā

1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1

1.1.1 P: From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1 (If it is beyond Canto 10 Chapter 13, it is from the purport of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples)

1.1.1 V: From Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 1.1.1.

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For any comments or feedbacks mail us at

[pradipika@vidyapitha.in](mailto:pradipika@vidyapitha.in)

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**BHĀGAVATA  
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam clearly states that Balarāma is also known as Rāma. Therefore, it is not artificial for us to speak of Lord Balarāma as Lord Rāma. (SB 10.2.13 P)